

Message Text

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44

ACTION AID-59

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R 251130Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY BAMA KO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4550

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAMA KO 2988

ABIDJAN FOR REDSO

DAKAR FOR RDO

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, PFOR, ML, US

SUBJECT: MALIAN VIEWS ON U.S. ASSISTANCE

1. CDO LEVIN AND CHARGE MET AUGUST 20 WITH SEYDOU TRAORE, SECRETARY GENERAL, MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, TO REVIEW, AT HIS REQUEST, U.S. ASSISTANCE TO MALI. DURING THE HOUR LONG CONVERSATION, CDO TRACED THE HISTORY OF USAID EFFORTS, EXPLAINED THE RATIONALE FOR CONGRESSIONAL AID GUIDELINES AND OUTLINED CURRENT PROGRAMS. THE SECRETARY GENERAL FOUND THE ACCOUNT OF CURRENT ACTIVITIES IMPRESSIVE, HOPED AID PROGRAMS COULD BE STAGED AS PROJECTED, AND PLED FOR INCLUSION OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS IN U.S. EFFORTS TO HELP POOREST PEOPLE.

2. THE SECRETARY GENERAL SAID USAID'S FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE AND LIVESTOCK PROGRAMS COINCIDED CLOSELY WITH PRIORITY GOALS OF RULING MILITARY COMMITTEE WHICH BASED DEVELOPMENT PLANS ON FACT THAT MALI IS AN
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AGRICULTURAL AND PASTORAL COUNTRY. MILITARY COM-

MITTEE'S OPTIC DIFFERED FROM THAT OF U.S. IN THAT IT DID NOT DISSOCIATE INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR FROM OTHER DEVELOPMENTAL ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO HELP THE MAJORITY OF MALI'S POOR. THE OPENING OF NEW LANDS FOR AGRICULTURAL AND LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT WAS AN INTEGRAL PART OF INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS LIKE THE SELINGUE AND MANANTALI DAMS. THEN TOO, EMPHASIS ON PRODUCTION WAS GOOD BUT THE PEASANT NEEDED MEANS TO SELL HIS GOODS, BUY CERTAIN COMMODITIES, HAVE EDUCATIONAL AND HEALTH SERVICES, AND ENJOY A BETTER LIFE. THIS REQUIRED INFRASTRUCTURE. FINALLY, INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS ENJOYED A CERTAIN PSYCHOLOGICAL ADVANTAGE IN THAT PEOPLE READILY RECOGNIZED THEM AS GIFTS OF PARTICULAR COUNTRIES. POPULAR REGARD FOR A FOREIGN POWER WAS A FACTOR WHICH THE MALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD TO CONSIDER IN DETERMINING ITS FOREIGN POLICY. IT WOULD NOT BE A GOOD THING IF OTHER POWERS CO-OPTED THE INFRASTRUCTURE SECTOR WHILE THE U.S. CONTRIBUTION WAS HIDDEN IN VARIOUS RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

3. THE CDO REPLIED THAT USAID WAS FULLY AWARE OF INFRASTRUCTURE'S SIGNIFICANCE IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND OFTEN PICKED UP INFRASTRUCTURAL ASPECTS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES. MOREOVER, AID SOMETIMES FUNDED AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE SCHEMES SUCH AS THE SELINGUE DAM'S HAUTE VALLE PROJECT. USAID PROJECTS ARE BASED ON THE CONCEPT OF INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT. AS AN ILLUSTRATION, AID WAS INTRODUCING ITS PILOT RURAL HEALTH PROJECT WITHIN THE OPERATION MILS PRODUCTION SCHEME.

4. CDO CONTENDED THAT RURAL POPULACE KNEW WHO WAS HELPING THEM AND WERE APPRECIATIVE OF THAT HELP. RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS DID LACK VISIBILITY AMONG THE URBAN ELITE. THERE THE GOVERNMENT ITSELF COULD HELP BY GIVING THE RECOGNITION DUE VIABLE AID EFFORTS. CDO CITED THE CENTRAL VETERINARY LABORATORY AS A STELLAR PROJECT WHICH THE MALIAN GOVERNMENT HAD FAILED TO SUPPORT ADEQUATELY OR TO PUBLICIZE.

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5. THE SECRETARY GENERAL CONCLUDED THAT THE AMOUNT OF ASSISTANCE PROJECTED IN AID PROGRAMS WAS IMPRESSIVE. HE HAD NO DETAILED COMMENTS TO MAKE ON INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS, BUT HOPED EACH COULD BE CARRIED OUT ACCORDING TO THE PROJECTED CALENDAR. HAVING BEEN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED STATES AT THE TIME CONGRESSIONAL GUIDELINES WERE DRAWN, THE SECRETARY GENERAL

UNDERSTOOD CONGRESSIONAL CONCERNS BUT HAD DIFFICULTY
EXPLAINING US POLICY TO OTHERS. LACK OF SUPPORT FOR
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS COULD BE INTERPRETED AS A REFUSAL
OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST POWER TO HELP IN THE AREA WHERE
THE NEEDS ARE MOST ACUTE. THE SECRETARY GENERAL
HOPED USAID MALI AND THE EMBASSY WOULD BE ABLE TO
CONVINCE U.S. GOVERNMENT TO BROADEN ITS PERSPECTIVE AND
SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS ESPECIALLY IN COUNTRIES LIKE
MALI. EVEN IF THE U.S. DID NOT PARTICIPATE DIRECTLY IN
AN INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT, A FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARD
A PARTICULAR PROJECT MIGHT GUARANTEE ITS SUCCESS.
A NOD OF ASSENT FROM THE US OFTEN MEANT MORE IN
INFLUENCING OTHER DONORS THAN A MAJOR CONTRIBUTION
FROM ANOTHER COUNTRY.
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